

# ARCHIBALD'S AGATHA

By EDITH HUNTINGTON MASON  
AUTHOR OF "THE REAL AGATHA"

## SYNOPSIS.

Archibald Terhune, a popular and brilliant young bachelor of London, receives news that he has been made heir to the estate of his Aunt Georgiana, with an income of \$50,000 a year, on condition that he become engaged to a certain young lady. Failing to do so, the legacy will go to a third cousin in America. The story begins at Castle Wyckoff, where Lord Vincent and his wife, friends of Terhune, are discussing plans to find him a wife with the stipulated time. It seems that Lady Vincent is one of seven persons named Agatha, all close girlhood chums. She decides to invite two of them to the castle and have Archibald choose one of the three. Agatha Sixth strikes Archibald as a handsome beauty. Agatha First is a breezy American girl. Lady Vincent tells her husband that Agatha Sixth already cares for Archibald. The guests from Agatha Sixth's admission that she cares for him, but will require a month's time fully to make up her mind. Agatha First, neglected by Terhune, receives attention from Leslie Fraser. Four days of the previous time have passed when Terhune is called to London on business. Agatha First, on the plea of sickness, excuses herself from a motor trip planned by the Vincents. Later they arrive at the castle. The Vincents discuss Agatha's seeming duplicity. The following day the guests are at the castle. An old convent. Terhune continues his attentions to Agatha Sixth. Then suddenly he transfers his affections to Agatha First. Vincent scolds him for his apparent fickleness. The last evening of the time allotted in which to choose is near. The following day Solicitor Burns will arrive from London, and the Vincents are anxious to consummate the engagement. Vincent discovers Agatha First and a man with his arm around her waist. Vincent declares that the man must be Terhune. The next morning Terhune and Agatha First are very friendly. The breakfast table. The Vincents are anxious. In an interview with Vincent, his wife the latter cries in desperation over the puzzling condition of affairs. Solicitor Burns arrives. The Vincents are anxious. Will Terhune report as affianced or a free man? Terhune tells Lord Vincent that he proposes to Agatha Sixth and that she had refused to marry him.

## CHAPTER XI.—Continued.

"She was only trying you," I replied, taking Dearest's saying as my authority for advancing this opinion. "She had a right to do that! Every girl does it, in fact!"

"She nearly tried me too far," he said doggedly. "But I'm sorry it all happened, and if I had known I wouldn't have risked my happiness for the world!"

There didn't seem much more that I could say after that, and I gave up trying.

"Well, anyway, it's a deuced shame," I ended. "I must go up and see what my wife thinks about it. Meanwhile you might be trying to persuade Barnes over there," I smiled at the stiff elderly gentleman on the hearthrug, "to give us more time. It can't be twenty minutes to one now, and I'm afraid it would take more time than that to persuade a certain young lady to change her mind, even if Dearest were to make the attempt." But I got no answering smile from Barnes.

"I have no voice in the matter whatever," he said. "I am here merely to carry out the instructions of my client, Mrs. James, to see that her injunctions in regard to the condition upon which Mr. Terhune is to inherit the piece of property in abeyance are obeyed faithfully and to the letter." Having finished this unfeeling speech, which he had couched in as formal phraseology as if he had been addressing judge and jury instead of poor old Arch and myself, he lapsed into meditative silence.

My friend, perceiving that there was no help to be had in that quarter, turned imploringly to me. "Go up and see what you can do, Vincent," he said, "there's a good chap!"

"With all the pleasure in life!" I replied. "And I may persuade her to relent, who knows? So cheer up, old fellow!" And I left them.

"What is all this about Terhune?" I asked excitedly, bursting into my wife's room without my usual preliminary knock, and quite forgetting William's caution that she did not wish to be disturbed.

"Do you mean to say that she has really refused the old boy? I thought you said—"

"But there I stopped, for I was on the floor with her head in Dearest's lap, was Agatha Sixth, and I caught a glimpse of a little tear-stained cheek that smote my heart with a guilty sense that there were two sides to every question always, and that something here was very wrong.

"Will you be kind enough—" began my wife. She had been going to ask me to leave the room, I knew, but it wasn't necessary. Agatha Sixth got to her feet on a sudden and, with a manner of gratitude to my wife, slipped past me with averted face and fled down the corridor to her room. We heard the door bang in the distance. I looked at Dearest, and Dearest looked at me.

"It's the cruellest thing I ever heard of," she said, speaking first, "and I should think you and your worthy friend would be proud of your work!" Yes, that's just what she said. I never was so taken aback in my life. Dearest speaking so to me. Why was I to blame, I wanted to know? And fancy referring to old Arch, whom Dearest had always petted and made even more of than I have, as my "worthy friend!" Really, it was amazing!

"But, my dear girl," I said, "it isn't my work, and Terhune's more to be pitied than to be blamed, as far as I can see! He's a wretched unlucky, I'll admit, but, after all, making love to Agatha First on the sly isn't a hanging matter, is it?"

"Very well," I said. "Don't answer me if you don't choose, and I'll go fast enough. I don't care to stay any longer. But I think you're making a great fuss over nothing, and I don't see that the misfortunes of our friends is excuse enough for a row between us, at all!" I said this with much dignity and went toward the door. Rerushing it, I threw a parting shot at me.

"Besides," I said, "you know you'll have to see me pretty soon in spite of yourself. It will be time for luncheon in a quarter of an hour, and I suppose you intend to come down!"

She didn't answer, and I went down the corridor and descended the stairs in considerable of a temper, I admit.

"By Jove!" I said to Terhune, whom I found waiting anxiously for me at the foot of the stairs, "if I were you I wouldn't waste any more time over Agatha Sixth! She and my wife are in league, I should think to prevent you from inheriting a fortune! The girl cares for you, I know. Dearest told me as much, but they're just contrary enough, the pair of them, to wait until it's too late to get your aunt's property before they admit it to you! Some Quixotic notion about love for love's sake only seems to have so possessed them that they will not actually be content until they've forced you to sacrifice the property. All women's nonsense, too, I say. There's no reason why you shouldn't have had both! But since they're so pig-headed about it, upon my word, I'd outwit them yet, if I were you!" I was thoroughly excited and sore, or perhaps I was thoroughly angry. This is a chance in a hundred to make yourself rich for life! I wouldn't wait for them, if I were you! I'd go ahead and ask Agatha First before the time's up. "She'd have you in a moment!"

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see me. Some one who had just come in an automobile and was waiting at the carriage entrance in his machine.

## CHAPTER XII.

I hurried round to that part of the castle, followed more mechanically than inquisitively by Terhune, and saw on the stoop under the port-cochere, through the wide-open doors, a slight young fellow of about Arch's build, with a dark, anxious face, just relinquishing a long duster to his chauffeur. But even before I had perceived who it was, my eyes wandered back of him and took in the automobile he'd just stepped from, with a vague sense of having seen it somewhere before. But its owner surprised me more, for it was Murray Brancepeth—of all people! "What in thunder brought him here?" I wondered. I hadn't seen him in a year of Sundays!

"Hello, Vincent!" he cried, on seeing us. "And old Terhune, too!" And he caught our hands in a large, exuberant grip. Too exuberant, I could see Terhune thought, for he was frowning, and I must say I felt inclined to resent Brancepeth's familiarity, myself, for I had never known the fellow well, when he followed his hands back by a great slap on my shoulder. But by his next words it was explained and excused in the same moment, as were many other things that had happened lately.

"Where's Agatha First?" he cried. "It's all right now! Miss Simpkins has eloped and we can get married."

An enigmatical speech enough, I'll admit, and, of course, I don't mean to say that it alone was the means of enlightening Terhune and myself as to the new turn this rather complicated and stubborn affair of his aunt's property had taken.

It was only after a number of questions had been asked and answered that we understood him. When it appeared that he, Brancepeth, had been in love with Miss Endicott and she with him ever since the first Castle Wyckoff houseparty, but that there was an obstacle to their marriage which prevented their acknowledging their attachment, which obstacle consisted of the inexorable determination of Brancepeth's sole relative, a wealthy uncle, that he should marry a certain Miss Simpkins, an heiress herself, and a neighbor of his uncle's.

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## English Women Smoke Pipes.

The latest fancy of the woman-smoker is a pipe—not the tiny affair that suffices for the Japanese, but a good-sized briar or a neat hickory-shank. The pipe is boldly carried along with a gold band case and chain-purse. For some time now the cigarette has given place to a cigar, small in size and mild in quality. Women said they were tired of the cigarette, and wanted a bigger smoke. —London Mail.

## Cripple Rides Bicycle.

George Anstey, aged 12, a cripple, of Leicester, England, is one of the most remarkable cyclists in the country. Both his legs are withered and useless, but the Leicester Cripples' Guild has provided him with a two-wheeled pedalling machine, with a padded tube covering the axle bar. Across this he lies face forward, and with wooden clogs strapped to his hands he propels himself along the streets and roads in a marvellously rapid manner. He has complete control of the machine, his hands acting as pedals, steering gear, and brake combined.

## Too Ardent a Lover.

Georgio Fontana, an embroiderer who lives in the Rue des Vignes in Paris, has found himself condemned to a month's imprisonment for what seems to her a harmless act.

She was going home from a concert a few evenings ago when she decided she would like to see her fiancé. As he happens to be a fireman whose station is in her own neighborhood it occurred to her it would be very easy to summon him to her side by breaking the glass of the fire alarm and sounding a call.

She did so and in a few moments fire engines came from several directions, all laden with firemen, of course, but alas! her fiancé was not among them, and more than that the firemen were angry, and before she knew what had happened she was taken to a magistrate, who proceeded to make the source of true love run unsmoothly by sending her to prison for a month in spite of her tears and protests that she thought it would be a simple way of bringing her fiancé to her side.

## NEW SAWS BADLY NEEDED

The Old-Fashioned Ones Somehow Don't Seem to Fit Into Modern Situations.

"You know all the copybook, McGuffey's reader line of talk about taking the advice of one's elders?" began the sad-eyed, unfurnished little man on the car. "Sure you do. Now let me tell you something. See that big apartment house over there on the right? That little business block right next to it?"

"Well, there weren't any apartment houses or business blocks on it when I first clapped eyes on it. It was a howling wilderness, in fact, and you could almost chase rabbits up here. That was about eighteen years ago. I had a hunch then—and I was only eighteen years old at that time—that this land would some day jump in value by leaps and bounds. When I was twenty years old I came into a bunch of \$15,000. I went to my guardian, an old man, pretty prominent in estate management and wisdom at that time, and I told him I wanted to soak the whole \$15,000 in this block of ground I pointed out to you. The block was then on the market for exactly \$15,000. The old gentleman pook-pooked me.

"Go away, boy," he said to me, with a patronizing smile. 'You don't know what you want. It's my duty to save you from such wild notions as this one you've got into your head. They're shooting rabbits and squirrels out there on that plot 50 years from now. G'way.'"

"I argued it with him, and he sat down on me. Then he went and invested my \$15,000 at three per cent. "Three years ago the man who bought that same block of ground for \$15,000 sold it for about \$200,000 cash, and he's now cruising over in the Mediterranean or some place or other, while I'm taking my wife out for nickel car rides and wondering where my \$15,000 went."

"There's got to be a new set of wise saws invented for twentieth century consumption. The McGuffey's reader kind are moth eaten."

## That Suit for Libel

Against the Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Gave a Splendid Chance to Bring Out Facts

A disagreement about advertising arose with a "weekly" Journal.

Following it, an attack on us appeared in their editorial columns; sneering at the claims we made particularly regarding Appendicitis.

We replied through the regular papers and the "weekly" thought we hit back rather too hard and there